

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CORRECTED TEXT)

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, KS, US
SUBJ: PRESIDENT PAK'S ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S PRESS CONFERENCE

SUMMARY: ON JANUARY 18, PRESIDENT PPAK CHONG-HUI HELD HIS ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S "PRESS CONFERENCE" -- A SERIES OF PRE-ARRANGED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS BROADCAST LIVE ON NATIONWIDE TV AND RADIO. CONFERENCE LASTED TWO HOURS AND FIFTY MINUTES AND COVERED BROAD RANGE OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. THE CONFERENCE PROVIDED THE PRESIDENT WITH A FORMAT TO REVIEW THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF 1977 AND ENUNCIATE GOVERNMENT POLICY FOR 1978. IN GENERAL, PAK EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE NATION'S PERFORMANCE IN THE PAST YEAR AND PROMISED CONTINUATION OF PAST POLICIES WHICH ENSURE NATIONAL SECURITY, ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND POLITICAL/ SOCIAL STABILITY. END SUMMARY.

1. ON ECONOMIC ISSUES, PAK REVIEWED THE PERFORMANCE OF
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THE ECONOMY IN 1977, NOTING ROK HAD MAINTAINED BOTH ECONOMIC STABILITY AND SUSTAINED GROWTH. HE EMPHASIZED ACHIEVEMENT OF TEN BILLION DOLLARS IN EXPORT SALES, WITH MANUFACTURED GOODS ACCOUNTING FOR MORE THAN NINETY PERCENT OF TOTAL. PAK POINTED OUT IMPROVEMENT IN ROK BALANCE OF PAYMENTS AND SIZEABLE HOLDING OF FOREIGN RESERVES. TURNING TO POLICY FOR 1978, PAK

PREDICTED THAT GNP WOULD REACH \$1,000 PER CAPITA BY THE END OF 1978. THE POLICY OF ENCOURAGING EXPORTS WOULD BE CONTINUED, AS WOULD DEVELOPMENT OF HEAVY AND CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES. THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ALSO EMPHASIZE MANPOWER AND TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT, PRICE STABILIZATION, AND BALANCED INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT. IMPORT LIBERALIZATION COMBINED WITH ENCOURAGEMENT OF DOMESTIC OUTPUT WOULD BE USED TO HELP STABILIZE COMMODITY PRICES.

2. ON POLITICAL MATTERS, PAK POINTED OUT THAT, UNDER FIVE YEARS OF THE YUSIN SYSTEM, THE NATION HAD MAINTAINED POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STABILITY IN THE FACE OF MANY TRIALS. FOR THAT REASON, HE CONCLUDED THE YUSIN SYSTEM SHOULD AND WOULD BE CONTINUED. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION THIS YEAR, PAK MAINTAINED THAT, SINCE THE PRESIDENT IS NOMINATED AND CHOSEN BY THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR UNIFICATION, IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE FOR HIM TO SAY WHETHER OR NOT HE SEEKS A FOURTH TERM OF OFFICE.

3. IN FOREIGN POLICY, PAK PROMISED CONTINUANCE OF TRADITIONAL CLOSE TIES WITH US INCLUDING MAINTENANCE OF JOINT DEFENSE SYSTEM. HE SAID THAT THERE ARE SOME DISCORDS BETWEEN THE US AND KOREA BUT THAT THESE COULD BE SOLVED IN A SPIRIT OF RECIPROCITY AND COOPERATION. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE SAID HE WOULD DEVOTE HIS EFFORTS TO THE MAINTENANCE OF A COMMON DEFENSE SYSTEM WITH THE US AND DESCRIBED SOUTH KOREA'S MILITARY TIES WITH THE US AS THE CORNERSTONE OF ITS SECURITY DIPLOMACY. REGARDING OTHER COUNTRIES, PAK OUTLINED CONTINUANCE OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ALLIES, INCREASED ATTENTION TO PROMOTION OF TIES WITH NON-ALIGNED NATIONS, ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH THOSE NATIONS WHICH HAVE NO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ROK, AND AN "OPEN DOOR" POLICY TOWARDS CONTACT WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES.

4. PRESIDENT PAK ALSO DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE TIME TO SOCIAL ISSUES AND OTHER PROBLEMS. UNDER SOCIAL POLICIES, HE CALLED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES THROUGH EDUCATION AND IMPROVED LABOR CONDITIONS. HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT CONSTRUCTION OF TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATIVE CAPITAL WOULD NOT BEGIN FOR TEN TO FIFTEEN YEARS AND DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO SUCH PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES AS NEED TO BALANCE MATERIAL PROGRESS WITH RESTORATION OF HUMANITY, APPLICATION OF SAEMAUUL MOVEMENT TO FACTORIES, HIS VISION OF PROPER LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS, AND PROMOTION OF SPIRIT OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE. IN RESPONSE TO LAST

QUESTION, ON POSSIBLE RELAXATION OF TENSION WITH NORTH KOREA, PAK REEMPHASIZED HIS PREVIOUS POLICY OF PEACE FIRST, RE-UNIFICATION SECOND AND, AFFIRMING THAT SOUTH ALREADY TEN YEARS AHEAD OF NORTH ECONOMICALLY, PREDICTED CONFIDENTIALLY THAT IN 1980'S SOUTH WOULD SURPASS NORTH MILITARILY, A PROSPECT WHICH WILL INDUCE NORTH TO RESUME DIALOGUE WITH SOUTH, "BEFORE LONG".

5. PRESIDENT PAK'S 1978 PERFORMANCE IS NOTABLE FOR ITS LENGTH (NEARLY AN HOUR LONGER THAN SCHEDULED) AND FOR THE RATHER INFORMAL PASSAGES IN WHICH HE APPARENTLY DEPARTED FROM HIS PREPARED TEXT TO EXPAND ON SUCH SOCIAL TOPICS AS BUILDING OF NEW CAPITAL, TREATMENT OF BUS CONDUCTRESSES, AND SPIRIT OF MUTUALITY BETWEEN LABOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND MANGEMENT. OVERALL EFFECT OF THESE INTERLUDES WAS TO BREATHE SOME LIFE INTO HIS USUALLY COLORLESS PRESENTATION.

6. PAK'S SPEECH IS TOP STORY IN ALL AFTERNOON PAPERS WEDNESDAY. EMBASSY EXPECTS FULL TEXT IN ENGLISH WITHIN A FEW DAYS AND WILL FORWARD TO DEPARTMENT BY AIR POUCH. SNEIDER

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